

pencil and reddens her lips, adjusting their outline, lights another cigarette.

*April 21, 1917.*—Havre.<sup>1</sup> All morning dictating telegrams to Washington; one saying that Ruddock can be spared, though I regret to lose his services and his and Margaret's company, as I told the Department. One about recognition in the Congo of Belgian sovereignty. One announcing my arrival. One about Gray remaining in Brussels. Then came a long, characteristic telegram from Hoover, in his rough, positive tone, protesting against the Belgian Government's attitude in regard to Gray, criticizing Villalobar, and so on.... So my telegram to Washington had to be redrafted and recoded, for I don't wish to go contrary to Hoover's wishes in Commission matters.

Nell and I went to l'Hôtellerie to have tea with Madame Vanderfelde. (Her husband was among my callers yesterday; he came to see us and at the same time to see the Russian minister, Nellidow, who is at this hotel; he is about to go to Copenhagen to try to undo the devilry the German Socialists have been doing there with the Russian "comrades." He thought I was Nellidow, talked to me about his plans, I was confused, in a sort of daze—then he saw it was a mistake!) Madame ——— came to tea with us, knew Villalobar, a most brilliant woman. English, with an intellectual grasp of things, very clever, bright and entertaining. Not at all pretty, strange eyes, and dressed in a yellow plaid gown with a string of enormous yellow beads about her neck, amber I suppose. Was quite outspoken in her criticism of Belgians, hinted that the Belgian Government here are old fogies, and so forth, said most of them should be shot and would be after the war if the Belgians had any spirit left. Talked of Lloyd George, saying precisely what T. P. said the other day about his lack of principle, and his truckling to Tories; said he had no real following any more in any quarter, that neither Tories nor Liberals liked him.

<sup>1</sup> The Belgian Government was placed at Havre, 200 miles from the front, because it was the nearest available place. Originally Abbeville had been selected, 100 miles to the North, but the British needed it as a railroad base. The Ministers were here or at Ste.-Adresse, near by. Here too, or near by, were Belgian munitions plants employing 15,000 people, and a great Belgian automobile-truck plant. Some 20,000 Belgian soldiers worked here, and 3,000 in the Government departments. From the battle of the Yser to the end of the war the Belgian King and Queen lived in the little unconquered corner of Belgian soil, at or near La Panne. It was separated from the capital at Havre by a long and hard day's drive by car.

We came away and walked on the cliff. Madame ---- said Havre was too deadly dull and the Belgian ministers were too deadly stupid for her to remain here—and she is right.<sup>1</sup> Never was there such a group... as the Government, with perhaps four or five exceptions—Berryer, de Broqueville, Carton de Wiart..., Hymans, who is at London, and Vandervelde, who is too much of a Socialist to be wholly intelligent—as the others are not *enough* of Socialists to be intelligent. She wanted to know what would happen in Belgium when the Government returned. Would there be revolution? No, I said, only elections. And what will happen in the elections? In Asquith's words, I said, "Wait and see."

It was pleasant, it was strange, it was unusual to talk once more with a bright woman with modern views—like the fresh breeze that blows off the sea to the cliffs.

She told us how, when her husband went to America with the Belgian Commission at the beginning of the war, she wished to go but the Belgian Government wouldn't consent; then she wished to go alone to make speeches, raise money, and do propaganda work for the Belgians. The Ministers were shocked—the idea of a woman doing such a thing! She appealed to the King, and he said "Go!" She said that the Ministers here have no idea of what the Americans had done for Belgium, have no idea of the C.R.B., thought the Americans were in it only to make money! Most of them disliked Hoover, and so on, and so on!

Ah well! The best of the Belgians are in Belgium or in the trenches. The others don't count!

She told a story, too, of Poulet.<sup>2</sup> The day of the Russian revolution she came running in with the news. "How glorious it is!" said she. "Not at all!" said Poulet. "Look how they've arrested the Ministers!"

I gave Mme. Vandervelde 1,000 francs for her relief work among Belgian soldiers.

<sup>1</sup> After the outbreak of the war a "sacred union" was formed to conduct the Belgian Government. Vandervelde, the Socialist, became Minister of Intendance; General de Ceuninck, Minister of War; Berryer, Minister of the Interior; Paul Hymans (a Protestant) was the able Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Baron de Broqueville was President of the Council, or Prime Minister. Henry Carton de Wiart was Minister of Justice; and Vandevyvere was Minister of Finance. It was a little government without a nation to govern, and was treated in a more or less dictatorial fashion by the Allies who loaned it money. Any group under the circumstances would have become dull; and Whitlock later in his *Journal* speaks in high terms of some of the members.

<sup>2</sup> Poulet was Belgian Minister of Science and Arts.